

Message Text

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ORIGIN ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 IO-10 SAJ-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02

INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 OMB-01 /067 R

DRAFTED BY USOAS:TETAYLOR/JWFORD:JM

APPROVED BY ARA:MR. ROGERS

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO ALL AMERICAN REPUBLIC DIPLOMATIC POSTS

XMT AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN

AMEMBASSY NASSAU

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, OAS

SUBJECT: OAS GENERAL ASSEMBLY (GENERAL DEBATE)

REF: STATE 064860

PANAMA FOR AMBASSADOR MAILLIARD

1. THE OAS PREPARATORY COMMITTEE UNANIMOUSLY DECIDED
APRIL 4 TO RECOMMEND TO THE FOREIGN MINISTERS
ELIMINATION OF THE CUSTOMARY SPEECH-MAKING AT THE
BEGINNING OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY IN FAVOR OF LESS
STRUCTURED "CONVERSATIONS". IF ANY MINISTER LATER SHOULD
WISH TO MAKE STATEMENTS, HE COULD DO SO IN ANY
SESSION AFTER THE END OF THE "CONVERSATIONS".

2. THERE WAS CONSIDERABLE DISCUSSION ON PROCEDURES
FOR HOLDING THE "CONVERSATIONS", ESPECIALLY OVER WHETHER
THERE SHOULD BE VERBATIM MINUTES. AS A COMPROMISE,
IT WAS FINALLY DECIDED BY CONSENSUS TO RECOMMEND THAT,
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"WITHOUT PREJUDICE TO ANY INFORMAL MEETINGS THAT THE

HEADS OF DELEGATION MAY DECIDE TO HOLD, THE CONVERSATIONS SHOULD BE FORMAL, WITH RECORDS OF THE POSITIONS OF THE GOVERNMENTS AND THE CONCLUSIONS OBTAINED."

3. COMMENT: THERE ARE MANY PRECEDENTS IN THE OAS FOR INFORMAL MEETINGS, I.E. IN PRIVATE AND WITHOUT

VERBATIM TRANSCRIPTS OR FIXED SPEECHES, WHEN DISCUSSING SENSITIVE AGENDA ITEMS, FOR EXAMPLE: TERRORISM AND KIDNAPPING, ADMISSION OF JAMAICA AS NEWEST MEMBER STATE WITHOUT BREAKING CONSULAR TIES WITH CUBA, SALVADOR/HONDURAN WAR, ETC. THE OAS PREPARATORY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION BOILS DOWN TO A RECOGNITION OF THE FACT THAT THE FOREIGN MINISTERS CAN IN FINAL ANALYSIS DECIDE TO HOLD ANY KIND OF MEETING THEY WANT, WITH OR WITHOUT MINUTES, ETC.

3. IN THE COURSE OF THE DEBATES IN THE OAS PREPARATORY COMMITTEE WHICH LASTED TWO FULL DAYS, PANAMA OAS AMBASSADOR PITTY WAS MOST VOCAL, OBSERVING THAT AT PAST OAS ASSEMBLIES WE HAVE WITNESSED A MONOLOGUE IN WHICH EACH ONE COMES TO HEAR HIMSELF, AND HAVE BECOME FLOODED WITH RESOLUTIONS AND DECLARATIONS BEARING NAMES OF CAPITALS, RIVERS AND SEASIDE RESORTS. HE AND SEVERAL OTHER AMBASSADORS DREW A DISTINCTION BETWEEN THE NEW DIALOGUE AS PRACTISED IN TLATELOCO AND THE "CONVERSATIONS" AS RECOMMENDED FOR THE OAS GENERAL ASSEMBLY. THE NEW DIALOGUE WAS BETWEEN LATIN AMERICA AND THE UNITED STATES WHEREAS THE CONVERSATIONS WITHIN THE OAS ASSEMBLY ARE AMONG ALL MEMBER STATES.

4. USOAS VIEWS THE RESULTS OF THE PREPARATORY COMMITTEE MEETINGS AS A CAUTIOUS, EXPERIMENTAL STEP FORWARD TOWARD MAKING THE OAS ASSEMBLY MORE EFFICIENT. SOME COUNTRIES, PARTICULARLY PERU, WERE MOST CONCERNED OVER THE PROSPECT OF A MEETING WITHOUT VERBATIM MINUTES. US REP POINTED OUT THAT IT HAD NO OBJECTION TO OPEN MEETINGS, WITH PROCEEDINGS FULLY RECORDED, IN ADDITION TO PRIVATE MEETINGS. BUT HE CITED THE PRECEDENTS FOR PRIVATE MEETINGS IN OAS FORUMS AS IN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PARAGRAPH THREE ABOVE, SUGGESTED USE OF RAPPORTEUR TO MAKE SUMMARIES OF DECISIONS ARRIVED AT IN PRIVATE, AND NOTED THAT EXPERIENCE HAS SHOWN THAT PRIVATE MEETINGS WITHOUT VERBATIM MINUTES ARE MOST LIKELY TO LEAD TO SUBSTANTIVE RESULTS.

5. IN DISCUSSIONS WITH FOREIGN MINISTERS OR OTHER DELEGATES TO THE ASSEMBLY, YOU MAY DRAW UPON

PARAGRAPH 4. INGERSOLL

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